

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SEOUL 04527 310843Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 INR-07

CIAE-00 DODE-00 ACDA-07 PRS-01 IO-13 SSO-00

INRE-00 NSCE-00 L-03 /067 W

-----310849Z 001741 /15 L

O 310802Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4225

CONFIDENTIAL SEOUL 4527

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, KS, US

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT CARTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT.

REF: SEOUL 4496

1. ON ORDERS FROM PRESIDENT PARK, PRESIDENTIAL PROTOCOL

SECRETARY CHOE KWAN-SOO CALLED ME IN ON MAY 31 TO REQUEST  
CLARIFICATION OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S MAY 26 PRESS CONFERENCE  
STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT PRESIDENT PARK HAD ADVOCATED  
GROUND FORCE WITHDRAWAL IN PAST.

2. CHOE SAID THAT PRESIDENT PARK AND KOREAN GOVERNMENT  
VIEWED WITH SERIOUSNESS THESE COMMENTS SINCE PRESIDENT PARK'S  
VIEWS AND POSITION ON GROUND FORCES WITHDRAWAL WERE PUBLICLY  
ON RECORD AS WELL AS TRANSMITTED TO US PRIVATELY, MOST  
RECENTLY DURING MEETINGS WITH UNDER SECRETARY HABIB AND  
GENERAL BROWN. IN MOST RECENT MEETING PRESIDENT PARK MADE  
CLEAR IMPORTANCE HE ATTACHED TO US PRESENCE, ALTHOUGH ACCEPTING  
GROUND FORCES WITHDRAWAL.

3. CHOE SAID THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATEMENT COULD LEAD  
TO DOUBTS BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE KOREA ABOUT PRESIDENT  
PARK'S TRUE POSITION. MANY KOREAN FRIENDS IN ASIA,  
WHO HAVE SUPPORTED PRESENCE OF US GROUND FORCES, WOULD QUESTION  
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CREDIBILITY OF PRESIDENT PARK UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.

CHOE URGED VERY EARLY OFFICIAL AND PUBLIC CLARIFICATION  
OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S REMARKS WITH APPROPRIATE CONFIRMATION  
TO ROKG.

4. I TOLD CHOE THAT I HAD ALREADY ALERTED WASHINGTON TO  
CONCERN ABOUT REMARKS (REFTEL), BUT WOULD TRANSMIT KOREAN

GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS AGAIN. I POINTED OUT THAT IN PAST  
PRESIDENT PARK HIMSELF HAS SAID THAT KOREAN FORCES AFTER  
COMPLETION OF FORCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN COULD DEFEND AGAINST  
NORTH KOREA ALONE WITH US GROUND FORCES NON-INVOLVEMENT.  
HE RESPONDED THAT THIS DID NOT IMPLY ANY ADVOCACY OF  
WITHDRAWAL SINCE PRESIDENT PARK HAD ALSO URGED AMERICAN FORCES  
BE KEPT HERE AS COUNTER BALANCE TO SOVIETS AND CHINESE, AND AS  
DETERRENT.

5. RECOMMENDATION: I WOULD HOPE THAT APPROPRIATE CLARIFICATION  
MIGHT BE MADE AS THIS ISSUE COULD BE MAGNIFIED TO MAJOR DIS-  
AGREEMENT BETWEEN US AND ROK.

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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